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Comments on Evidence of Gasoline Shortage in Kazakhstan



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1. There is no evidence to suggest that the shortage of gasoline in Kazakhstan reflects unusual stockpiling or a nation-wide shortage of this product.

2. There is no evidence to suggest that the rail transport difficulties cited in reference document have been brought about by a general marshalling of tank cars for unusual POL transport missions elsewhere in the Soviet Union.

3. Unusually heavy transport requirements and requirements for gasoline in Kazakhstan were doubtless brought about during the months of August and September by rains in the new lands area which were far greater than usual. These rains would have called for emergency hauling of grain stored in the open and would also, because of muddy roads, have increased fuel consumption over that of trucking operations under normal conditions.

4. It is believed that the POL shortages in Kazakhstan are partly the result of administrative and planning failures, complicated by the adverse weather conditions. Since the production of crude oil in the USSR has increased about 20 percent in 1955 over 1954 and since the larger part of POL transport is by tank car, the demand for rail transport of POL in 1955 may have increased very substantially, bringing about an increasingly high degree of utilization of the tank car park. This tightening tank car situation together with the fact that in the new lands area tank cars are being used for temporary POL storage purposes (thus incurring an unusually long turnaround time), may well have made the railroads extremely reluctant to allocate additional tank cars to the Kazakhstan region.

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NSA review completed

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